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13 January 1956

Memorandum of Conversation

Participants: Senator Richard B. Russell (D., Ga.)
Mr. Allen W. Dulles and Mr. [redacted]

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1. The Director first briefed the Senator on his appearance yesterday before the Military Applications Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. He reported to the Senator that the Subcommittee, in addition to wanting information as to the latest intelligence on atomic energy matters within the Soviet Union, wanted a report on Russian guided missile development. The Director wanted Senator Russell to know that he had received this request, and that he was going to discuss how it should be handled with the Service Departments concerned. He wanted to know if Senator Russell had any views as to the jurisdiction of the Atomic Energy Subcommittee with regard to guided missile development in the Soviet Union.

Senator Russell stated that he had no objection to this Subcommittee getting into matters of this sort, but urged that the Director or other Administration witnesses give only the minimum necessary details to this or to any other Congressional committee. Senator Russell expressed his acute awareness of the security factors involved in this whole subject, and his desire to keep to an absolute minimum the numbers of people who should have access to this type of sensitive information.

2. The Director told Senator Russell that CIA and representatives of G-2 and Air Force Intelligence were anxious to hear a report from him on his recent trip behind the Iron Curtain, and that we would send representatives to his office for this purpose at the Senator's convenience. Senator Russell said that he would be happy to do so, and asked that we contact his office for an appointment the first of next week. The Senator did make one or two observations on his trip. He indicated that no where in Russia did he see any kind of a fuel tank above ground. He had seen a few of them in Czechoslovakia and other countries, but not a one in Russia. He also commented on the bad condition of the paved roads in Russia.

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3. There was some discussion of the Mansfield resolution. The Director stated his view that although he was not going to campaign in any way against the resolution, he did feel that the present arrangements with Armed Services and Appropriations Committees were a preferable way of dealing with the Congress. Senator Russell appeared to agree with the Director, and was happy to learn that Chairman Vinson was about to set up an Intelligence Subcommittee on the House side. The Senator observed that if Carl Vinson actively opposed a Joint Committee resolution, it would probably not pass the Congress, even if Senate action were favorable. He added that he doubted that the bill would even pass the Senate.

4. The Director asked whether the Senator would consider an early meeting of his Subcommittee on Central Intelligence, indicating that he felt it would be a good psychological move, and that it would also give him an opportunity to brief the Committee on a number of items of CIA business. The Senator said he would be happy to do so, and agreed to call a meeting of the Subcommittee for Wednesday, January 25th, at 10:30 am. in room 205 Senate Office Building (Senator Russell's office). The Director mentioned career service legislation as one item he may want to discuss, at least generally, with the Committee.

5. The last item discussed was the building problem. The Director described in detail the events which had thus far occurred, indicating that no decision could be made on his part until after another round with the National Capital Planning Commission. The Director stated that he felt he should not proceed on the Langley site unless he had the clear support of the White House and of Congressional leaders. In the latter connection, he requested Senator Russell's advice as to which members of the Senate might be particularly interested in this problem. Senator Russell stated that as far as his Committee was concerned, he considered Senator Byrd the only member who might have a definite interest. The Director indicated that he had talked to Senator Byrd, and that he felt the Senator was completely neutral on the subject, as long as we were considering sites in Virginia.

The Director asked Senator Russell's advice as to whether Senator Neely should be contacted, in view of the fact that he is a voting member of the National Capital Planning Commission. The Senator advised the Director to contact Senator Neely directly. His view, without knowing the facts, was that although Senator Neely probably did not have any particular interest in the problem, a friend had probably persuaded him to take a stand in favor of the Alexandria site. Senator Russell seemed to feel that the problem of location of the new building was one that the Director and the Administration essentially had to decide for themselves.

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Legislative Counsel

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